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CS 650 Tutorial in Christian Ethics

Christine Pohl

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**CS650: Tutorial in Christian Ethics
(One Credit Continuation of CS601)
Asbury Theological Seminary
Spring 2003**

Section A: 4/22-5/15, 2003 * Tues. & Thurs. 9:30 - 10:45am * M 202

**Christine Pohl, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: T & Th 12:30-3:00pm & by appointment**

Purpose:

To prepare students for ministry by training them to analyze and address the moral life from a Christian perspective. To enable ministers to equip their congregations for understanding moral responsibility and for practicing ministry with integrity. To assist in training ministers who will draw all persons, including those who are excluded by society, into the care and guidance of the community of faith under the Lordship of Christ. To assist in the training of ministers who will exemplify the Gospel-mandated holy life.

Objectives:

Students will be able:

- To provide a biblical basis for the moral life.
- To describe various historical and contemporary Christian interpretations of social and personal moral issues.
- To use the basic vocabulary of ethical analysis.
- To use basic tools of social analysis.
- To explain the Wesleyan emphasis on the various dimensions of holiness, specifically the expectation for personal integrity, moral concern, and social responsibility.
- To recognize and explain at a basic level the needs, contexts, and insights of various cultural groups and marginalized communities in society and in the church (these may include, but are not limited to, particularity arising from ethnic, gender, class, and geographic locations).
- To explain how responses to moral problems and moral integrity shape congregational life.

Texts: Miles, Rebekah L. The Pastor as Moral Guide (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999).
Packet (*readings are not necessarily in order*)

Evaluation:

- 85% Research Paper
- 15% Class Participation and Reading Record

Grade Range: Work for CS650 will be evaluated at a graduate/professional school level.

A = (4.0) Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

B = (3.0) Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

C = (2.0) Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

D = (1.0) Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives

F = (0) Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Participation: Students are required to complete all assigned readings on time. Reading Records will be collected on the last day of class. Timely completion of readings and informed participation in class make up 15% of the final grade.

Written Work: All written work must be typed with 12 point type, one inch margins on all four sides, and true double spacing. Follow page limit requirements. Late papers will be penalized commensurate with the degree of lateness and the adequacy of the excuse.

All written work must use inclusive language when reference is made to human beings (male and female). This provides for both greater inclusion and greater precision.

Research Paper: Students may choose a specific area to study in greater depth. Possible topic areas include: poverty, child or spouse abuse, AIDS, abortion, homelessness, mental retardation, substance abuse, racial discrimination, environmental issues, public education. Topics should be chosen early in the semester so that students can conduct research and reflect upon interweaving themes. The paper must reflect an approach to the problem that includes a specifically church-centered response. The body or notes of the paper should reflect a working knowledge of resources currently available in the community and church, as well as alternatives and improvements you might prefer. Consult with the professor in choosing your topic. 10-12 pages, due May 22.

Module #3: CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY IN THE VARIOUS SPHERES OF LIFE

Week 10 (4/22) Christians and Marriage, Family, and Sexuality

Miles, Rebekah, The Pastor as Moral Guide, pages 76-102.

Hays, Richard "Homosexuality," in The Moral Vision of the New Testament (HarperSanFrancisco, 1996)

Week 11 (4/29) Christians and Economics (Work, Poverty, Wealth)

Augustine, "Sermon XXXVI," NPNF1, Vol. VI

Calvin, John, "On Usury," in Calvin's Ecclesiastical Advice (Westminster/John Knox, 1991)

Wesley, John, "The Danger of Riches"

Wesley, John, "Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions"

Arnold, Heini, "Community of Goods--Is It Biblical?" The Plough (March 1984)

Neuhaus, Richard John, "Wealth and Whimsy: On Economic Creativity," First Things (Aug./Sept. 1990)
Polter, Julie, "Why Work?" Sojourners (Jan./Feb. 1997)
Miles, Rebekah, The Pastor as Moral Guide, pages 60-75.

Week 12 (5/6) Christians and Politics (Government, Civil Disobedience, Civility)

"The Martyrdom of the Holy Polycarp," Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1
Calvin, John, "Civil Government," The Institutes of the Christian Religion
Barmen Declaration
King, Martin Luther, "Letter From Birmingham Jail," Why We Can't Wait
(Harper & Row, 1963)
Mouw, Richard, "Defending Christian Civility" and "What's Good About
Pluralism" Uncommon Decency: Christian Civility in an Uncivil World
(InterVarsity Press, 1992).
Taylor, Daniel "Deconstructing the Gospel of Tolerance," Christianity Today
(January 11, 1999)

Week 13 (5/13) Conclusions

Reading Record due in class Thursday, May 15, 2003.

Research Paper due Thursday, May 22, 2003.